

2020 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests

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Mike Lester, State Forester



CSFS Makes a Positive Impact on Colorado's Forests



Despite the pandemic, the Colorado State Forest Service continues to work alongside landowners and strategic partners to improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk where it is most needed.



Forest Health Matters to Colorado's Citizens



**WE NEED OUR FORESTS,
MORE THAN EVER.**

Since the global pandemic arrived in early 2020, Colorado's wild and urban forests have been havens where residents can find solace and joy, exercise, rest and feel the healing benefits of connecting with nature.



Protecting Our Future After a Historic Wildfire Year



As the 2020 fire season clearly illustrated, the forest management needed to reduce fuels and mitigate wildfire risk to Colorado's residents, lands and water supplies is not happening fast enough.



CSFS Leads Efforts to Address Wildfire in Colorado



To mitigate wildfire risk, the CSFS will continue to:

- Participate in partnerships
- Reduce forest fuels
- Promote and support fire-adapted communities
- Grow seedlings and help with reforestation



Previous Wildfire Mitigation Efforts Helped Save CSU's Mountain Campus



“On multiple occasions, fire operations teams called out and complimented us on our prior work done on campus.”

**- Seth Webb,
Mountain Campus Director**



Spruce Beetle Remains Most Damaging Forest Pest



Since 2000, the spruce beetle has affected at least 1.88 million cumulative acres of forests in Colorado.



2020 Forest Insect and Disease Story Map

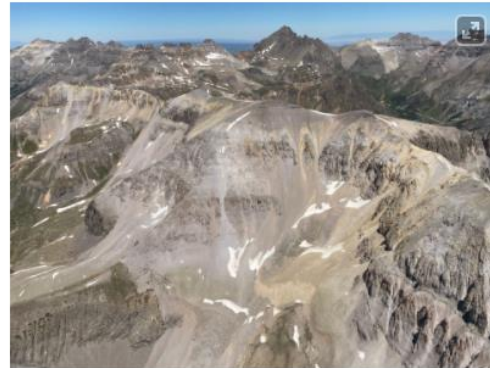


Explore insect and disease activity in your district:
bit.ly/ForestHealthReport

Colorado State Forest Service

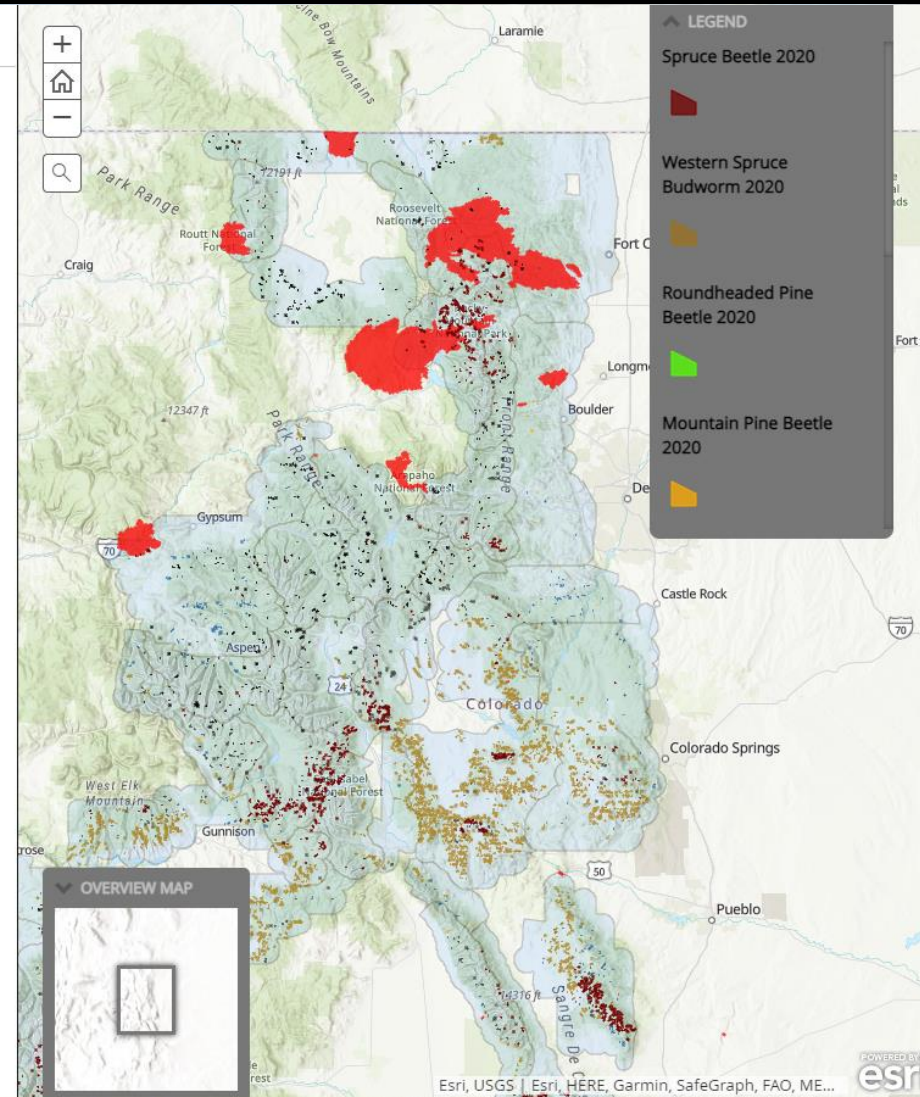


2020 Forest Insect and Disease Highlights: Colorado



San Juan mountains in southwest Colorado in 2020.

A key part of forest management is the regular monitoring for damage caused by forest pests. In Colorado, the primary source of information on forest pest conditions is an annual Aerial Detection Forest Health Survey. This is a cooperative program led by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) with Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) participation. Trained aerial



Colorado's Carbon Problem



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DISRUPTIONS TO COLORADO'S CARBON CYCLE

Forest management is not taking place at the pace and scale necessary to maintain forest health.

An expanding wildland-urban interface consumes forestland.

Wildfires release carbon. Burned trees decay, releasing more carbon, and some forests never grow back.

Insect and disease outbreaks create more dead and downed wood.

When watersheds suffer disturbances but lack restoration, carbon-rich soils and forest floor litter are lost.

Climate change can impact forest health and increase the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire.

We Must Invest More in Colorado's Forests



Until Colorado takes greater action, wildfires, forest pests and carbon storage will remain problems, impacting our air, our water, our safety and our economy. Colorado's forests require investment. Only then will they continue to support us.



Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program



We can make a difference for the health of our forests and solve these problems. One effective way we do that at the Colorado State Forest Service is through our grant program.



Grant-Funded Mitigation Helped Defend Houses During Bear Creek Fire



“We have so many residents in Colorado Springs who take mitigation seriously. I can’t thank them enough. The mitigation efforts they have taken, and some of the mitigation efforts we’ve done with our own fire department in the open space areas, kept the fire low to the ground.”

- Ted Collas, Colorado Springs Fire Department Fire Chief



2020 Agency Funding Review

2020 TOTAL BUDGET: \$15.7 MILLION

FUNDING



33%

Federal grants [\$5.2 million]

24%

State general fund, state grants and service-based revenues [\$3.8 million]

23%

Self-funded operations and other revenues [\$3.5 million]

20%

Severance tax [\$3.2 million]

EXPENDITURES



51%

Personnel services [\$8.1 million]

30%

Operating expenses [\$4.7 million]

18%

Grants to others [\$2.8 million]

1%

Payments to other agencies [\$0.05 million]

**capital improvements/equipment accounted for surplus in 2020*

2020 Colorado Forest Action Plan Available



Download the plan:

csfs.colostate.edu/forest-action-plan/

Explore the data:

coloradoforestatlas.org



Get Out and See Your Forests with the CSFS!



Interested in seeing on-the-ground forestry work going on in your area?

Get in touch with the Colorado State Forest Service!

